

Connecticut Adoptees Access to Original Birth Certificates

My name is Katie Zeranski. I am a 25 years old and was adopted from South Korea. Some of you may wonder why an internationally adopted person would be interested in promoting a bill that allows adult adoptees born in Connecticut access to their original birth certificates. The passing of this legislation not only benefits Connecticut born adoptees but speaks to a greater cause in ending the secrecy and stigma that has long been associated with adoption. For much of the 20th century adoption was based on confidentiality and secrecy. This was thought to protect all parties involved in a time where society was less accepting of diverse family structures.

We now live in an era where open communication about adoption and contact or exchanges between all members of the adoption triad is increasingly common and beneficial. The bill challenges the misconceptions that views adoptees as children for their entire lives, unable to make rational or responsible decisions concerning information about their past. There is much concern on how bills such as this will affect the welfare of birth mothers and their families. I am an adoptee that is also in the process of a birth parent search and trying to gain access to my biological history. As with many adoptees, I have no intention of disrupting or harming the lives of my birth parents.

The decision to explore my roots is not something that I have taken lightly or has not undergone a considerable amount of thought. Dealing with uncertainty, rejection, and unpleasant information is something all adoptees must come to terms before deciding to pursue this path. However, for many of us not knowing and not being allowed to know is a worse fate. Mostly, I hope to let my birth mother know that I am happy and well. I will always be grateful for her selfless decision and how it enabled me to grow up in a loving and supportive family.

Denying adult adoptees the opportunity to have information about their heritage is stripping them of the right to understanding their full identity as a human being. It denies birth mothers the possibility of knowing what happened to their children and providing potentially lifesaving medical information. Adopted parents are not given the chance to offer the best life possible to their children which involves learning and embracing all aspects of their identity. I urge you all to pass this bill and continue to positively reshape adoption in the 21st century.